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Today the dance is in a very sterile and unnatural state. People enjoy its theatrics, spectacle and shock entertainment, more than for the actual love of dance. On the more hopeful side of the picture, the male dancer is coming into more prominence again. When all this effort for sensationalism and noise subsides, possibly we will get back to more sensitive and intelligent creating in dance choreography.

To understand the position of the male in the dance world, we must go back into dance history. It will be necessary for us to shed centuries of prejudices, social habits, customs and intellectual ideas, to imagine what the dance was like in the very beginning of time. The origin of the word 'dance' seems to have been round dance, or, ring; the word is first used in the romance tongues, apparently borrowed from the old high German 'danson' meaning to stretch out. But the idea of dance as a movement stemming from an emotion goes back even further. Curt Sachs, the great dance historian was of the belief that dancing preceded man himself, - dance was to be found in the movement habits of birds and animals.

Primitive man danced for every occasion, for birth, circumcision, the consecration of maidens, marriage, funerals, hunting, war, victory, peace, spring and for the harvest. The themes were unlimited; their reasons for celebration were related to life, power, abundance and to health.

We can assume that sheer physical exuberance, ecstasy, reverence or grief, was the starting point for his wanting to dance in the beginning. And because man is distinguished from the animal in that he feels and thinks, that in his play and work he searches for meaning and content, these impulses eventually evolved into more complex dance patterns and even later into rituals.

The men's dances far exceed the women's dances in number. They alone do the hunting, war and sun dances, and almost always the animal, spirit and boy's initiation

dances. The rain and medicine dancers were their property as well. The men's dances were essentially extravert and sensory.

In all the dances that sprung from these times, the men's dances have been more flamboyant, colorful and exciting to watch; just as in nature the male bird is the most colorful and the one to attract the eye. The women's dances were only participant and are intravert in character. An example that most people know is the American Indian dances where the women are merely an accompaniment to the more physically exuberant dances of the men.

Dance went through many stages before dance spectacle was developed into religious ceremonies and rituals of every character. After the fall of Rome, the Christian church dominated for many years and the dance was dead for centuries. As the church damned the cruel spectacles of pagan Rome, it did maintain aspects of the art adaptable to religious ideas. Dance was incorporated into the ritual of the mass and traces of this influence survives in certain parts of the world today.

To dance and to move was such a basic thing that the church was not able to completely subdue it and in time it reappeared in the guise of folk dance at village festivals. With this rebirth of dance in folk activity, the door was open for the dance in the theatre. This first theatrical form appeared as elaborate pageants performed by aristocratic amateurs. And up until 1681 when Lully first introduced women dancers, all parts male and female, at this time on the public stage, were played by young men wearing masks.

There came then, a long period when the female out shown the male in dance with such stars as Marie Camargo and Marie Salle.

With the appearance of Noverre, the scene again changed. This period

concentrated on technique and the male dancers came into greater prominence and many more spectacular steps were developed. The famous Louis Dupre - the teacher of us all - and the two Vestris, father and son, were to enjoy fame and success never before equaled. The male dancer was again supreme. This was the beginning of the dance as we know it today and in the history of the art the most important innovations were made by the male, either as a teacher, performer or a creator. Sensitivity and the ability to communicate ideas and emotions through the movement of the body is the dancers and the dance creators primary qualification. This sensitivity is neither male or female in the performer, but as a creator the male has been the most ingenious. In the early history of dance, these were the great innovators in the dance theater. An abundance of information can be found in dance libraries should one care to read more about these men;

Jean Georges Noverre - 1727 - 1810
 Ivan Valberkh - 1766 - 1819
 Charles Louis Didelot - 1767 - 1837
 Jean Coralli - 1779 - 1854
 Auguste Bournonville - 1805 - 1879
 Jules Perrot - 1810 - 1892
 Arthur Saint-Leon - 1815 - 1870
 Christian Johanasson - 1817 - 1903
 Marius Petipa - 1819 - 1910
 Lev Ivanov - 1834 - 1901
 Pavel Gerdt - 1844 - 1917
 Alexander Gorsky - 1871 - 1924
 Serge Diaghliev - 1872 - 1929
 Michael Fokine - 1880 - 1942
 Leonide Massine - 1896 -

As performers this group can be said to have helped the cause of male dance before the public.

William Kemp - About 1600
 Louis Dupre - 1697 - 1774
 Gaetan Vestris - 1729 - 1808
 Auguste Vestris - 1760 - 1842
 Vaslav Nijinsky - 1890 - 1950
 Adolph Bolm - 1884 - 1951
 Michael Mordkin - 1881 - 1944

As teachers these men were great contributors to the technique of dance:

Salvatore Vigano - 1769 - 1821
 Carlo Blasis - 1795 - 1878

Enrico Cecchetti - 1866 - 1930
 Paul Gerdt - 1844 - 1917

One could go on and name hundreds of others who have contributed something to the art of the dance, but every male dancer today owes much to these men of the past. We need to go back to the image some of these greats set for future generations to live up to. Much of the training being given the present generation is lacking in most of the ingredients that go into producing an artist.

The training of a good male dancer must be very comprehensive and with more peripheral knowledge than the female. For ultimately his career should lead into teaching, directing or choreography. He must have a working knowledge of the female repertoire, as well as the male, and a complete knowledge of all dance forms. Music certainly is a help and an appreciation of all the related arts is mandatory. To be fully qualified takes upwards of eight to ten years of training.

When a young adolescent boy begins the study of ballet his training should not be hurried or forced. His physical development is on the average of two or three years behind that of a girl of the same age. By his third year he is able to take on harder work. Ballet is extremely rigorous on the center body, and it takes time to master the outward rotation of the legs. This is usually harder for the boys whose hips are narrower and placed more forward. With this in mind, the turn-out must come before the hips and legs are too muscular.

The reputation of our school in the training of excellent boys is without peer in our day and those who have grown up in the school from the age of 8 have usually been our better dancers. Before the Korean war the school had about 70 boys in the school and at one time, between 35 and 40 in service. The war naturally, delayed some of their careers but because of good basic training when they returned from service, all went right into the profession in a few months. At the moment, the school has approximately 30 eager young boys, mostly under the age of 14.

Between the ages of 16 and 22 is not really too late for a boy to begin but it does present problems for the student and for the teacher. Parental prodding makes the boy accept employment in dance long before he is fully prepared. Once they have earned a salary and have left their home school, they rarely progress further. Earning money gives them the illusion that they are professional and consequently, that is the end of their study. From the teachers point of view, the first two years are spent in laying a foundation for a technique and at least two more years of daily training should be had before they possess the qualities and abilities one looks for in good male dancing.

We hear often of public auditions for boys where hundreds appear and the choreographer rarely finds more than one or two whose work is acceptable. This is simply because most of them got the "show-biz bug" before they gave themselves time to learn something. It amounts to this - does he want a dance career or does he just want to be a chorus boy to have a few tours seeing the country and end up as a clerk in a department store.

INTERESTING FACTS ON MALE DANCERS

Sparta - By the Laws of Sparta, every male child over five had to study Pyrrhic dancing. It was accompanied by the flute and danced by armed warriors, simulating warlike deeds, with all the proper maneuvers for attack and defense.

Rome - During Augustus' reign, the celebrated dancers Pylades and Bathyllus were appearing upon the stage. One excelled in tragic and the other in comic scenes - performing whole plays by steps and gestures alone; and dancing all parts, male and female.

Egypt - Dervish parties were formed from a few men and boys, perhaps 10 or 20 who happened to be neighbors. Generally danced in moonlight which may connect them with some pre-Ishamite moonworship. These dancers were essentially devotional and the dancers would dance to the state of exhaustion and they would separate with a great sense of devotional virtue.

Dances exclusively for men - There is the Lithuanian "Mikita" and the Philippine "Tinikling" which uses long poles. The Ukrainian "Chumak" needs a whip. Then the numerous German "Schuhplattlers", the riotous Swedish "Oxdanse" or the Lithuanian Goat Dance, "Ozelis" and the "Prysiadhas" of the Slavish dances.

Kabuki - If we wish to place a date for the impetus given Kabuki theatre we would have to put it at 1652. When the authorities banned the "Young Men's Kabuki" they also outlawed music and dancing from the stage. "Men's Kabuki", therefore, was forced to concentrate on speech and drama.

Kabuki dancing, however, was so ingrained in Kabuki that the actors, who were now beginning to create their dynasties, not only kept the art of Kabuki dancing alive, but also reflected the essential dance character of Kabuki in their acting so that their acting movements, especially pantomime to the background of music, are in reality danced mime and mimed dance. The final development of Kabuki resulted in the all-male mature "Men's Kabuki" which became fixed as a tradition for Kabuki theatre.

The Scotch "Sword Dance" is thought to have originated as a preliminary to war, or perhaps danced on the field of battle itself to arouse the courage of the combatants. It is a descendant of the Pyrrhic dances of ancient Greece. Tacitus mentions it among the ancient Germans who danced un-clothed with drawn swords and spears, with great dexterity and grace. The Gauls and the Britons also had a kind of martial dance which was shown at every entertainment, performed by young men who had acquired the art of dancing among the sharp points of swords and spears with great agility and gracefulness. From the old style dance which went through the evolutions of attack and defense, the modern Scotch sword dance has retained only the dexterity of the dancer dancing over the swords on the ground without touching them.

Hungary - Up until the middle of the 19th century, the business of finding recruits for the army was an amazing sort of education. The Emperor charged two Hussar

regiments (made up of the finest male dancers that could be found) with the recruiting. Youths appearing suitable for military service, which was hard even in those days, were induced to enlist by fair promises and irresistible devices. An amazing system of seduction was soon perfected, the chief part in which was played by music and dancing. There was no surer way of captivating the sons of the dancing nation than that art which for them had an attraction they could not resist, and which made them easy victims once they had come under its alluring influence.

A new recruiter starts his work by wandering through the streets with his comrades to the strains of loud and noisy music - singing and dancing -

"And when the Captain saw
How I could dance with unsurpassed skill
He ordered me to dance alone
To show what I could do
And all the people hurried there
As fast as they could come.
They said: 'How well this handsome youth
Doth dance and leap and skip'
Such figures did I dance for them,
Their eyes sprang from their heads.
And excelling all musicians
I beat time with my spurs."

The recent visit of the Rebecca Harkness Company certainly proves that male dancing is again enjoying great popularity. It is hardly necessary for dancers like Jacques d'Ambroise and Edward Villella to be writing books on the problems of being a man in dance; if there is a problem, it is merely in being very excellent and being proud of this excellency. Few companies today have dancers to compare with Lawrence Rhodes, Helgi Tomasson and Finis Jhung. When a company can also supply other dancers like Dennis Wayne, Warren Conover, Salvatore Aiello, James Dunn, Robert Thomas and John Jones, they have it made.

We are very proud of our male alumni who have had success without the great financial aid these dancers have had. In most cases it has not been easy for them, but most of these have traveled by dancing in many parts of the world; have worked in Ballet Companies, Modern dance companies, musicals and concerts as dancers, choreographers and directors. At this point many now own their schools in various parts of the country.

The following men had their initial training at SC - JOHN KRIZA (Director of dance at Hull House), WILLIAM REILLY (teaching in Milwaukee, Wisconsin - JOHN SHARPE (choreographer and director), PATRICK CUMMINGS (dancer and choreographer), CHARLES BENNETT (First Chamber Dance Quartet), JAMES MOORE (Assistant Ballet Master at BT and Robbins Assistant director), WILLIAM MALONEY (teacher dancer and actor), JOHN NEUMEIER (dancer and choreographer), CHAUNCE CONKLIN (Director at Wesleyan University), JACKIE WARNER (dancer and comedian), JAY DEVLIN (comedian), GILDO DI NUNZIO (assistant conductor at the Metropolitan Opera), JOHN BARKER (teacher in New York) JAMES MORSKI (dancer) RONALD FRASIER (dancer assistant ballet master in Europe), and KELLY BROWN (teaching in Phoenix Arizona).

The following group came from other sources but work with SC influence - JAMES JAMIESON (teacher in (Wilmington, Delaware), LLOYD TYGETT (teacher and choreographer, Huntsville, Alabama), JACK TYGETT (teacher and choreographer in Los Angeles), JOSEPH KAMINSKI (teacher in Chicago), ARON GIRARD (teacher at Stockholm Opera in Sweden), and KAROLY BARTA (teacher choreographer).

There is such a thing as SC girls as well and many have done very well, too. The next issue of the Bulletin will be devoted to them.